

PUBLIC HEALTH REPORT

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THE PROMPT RECOGNITION of fungus infections was emphasized at a three-day workshop in which local health department representatives and state college instructors learned methods of working with and identifying fungi of medical importance.

With the increasing widespread use of antibiotics the problem of secondary fungus infections is coming more into prominence. The ability of local microbiologists to recognize specific types of fungus infections will contribute to the better control of epidemic types of fungus disease through proper lines of treatment.

The course was conducted by the staff of the department's Microbiology Laboratory, assisted by Dr. Lucille Georg of the U. S. Public Health Service.

A \$200,000 federal grant for a three-year study of the drinking habits of Californians has been awarded the department. The project, financed by the National Institute of Mental Health, will be the first of its kind in the United States and will be concerned with finding ways to determine how and why people drink and how drinking practices are related to everyday life.

Types of information sought will include kinds, amounts and frequency and regularity of ingestion of alcohol, the context of drinking (places, companions, rituals), reasons for drinking, attitudes about conditions attending drinking (driving, teenage, business lunches), individual and group consequences of drinking, and sub-populations which use alcoholic beverages, with special attention to teenage drinking.

The department's Advisory Committee on Air Sanitation met April 28 in Los Angeles to review the subject of air standards for atmosphere and motor vehicle exhausts.

An early consideration of this matter was important because of the Governor's program in air pollu-

tion, the pending legislation requiring this department to establish standards, and the short period of time that will be available to develop such standards before February 1, 1960.

Influenza has become increasingly prevalent in California since it first made its appearance in significant numbers in mid-February. The high school population has been the most affected so far.

In a two-week period in late April and early May, deaths from influenza and pneumonia were above the epidemic threshold, according to reports from eight California cities. There were 64 such deaths during this period April 24 to May 8. This compares with 110 deaths reported from these cities during a period of two weeks at the peak of the previous epidemic in December, 1957.

On April 17 the State Board of Public Health adopted regulations relating to the operation of Human Tissue Banks and other tissue preservation services. These are the first such regulations to be established in the nation.

A regional school nursing institute for representatives of seven mountain counties was held recently in Redding, co-sponsored by this department and the State Department of Education.

Discussion topics included health counseling, mental health in school health service, functions of school nurses in elementary and secondary schools, control of communicable diseases, nuisance diseases, and legal problems relating to school health.

Participating in the institute were physicians in private practice, school administrators and supervisors, school nurses, a clinical psychologist, health officers, housewives and public health nurses. They represented the counties of Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Siskiyou, Tehama and Trinity.